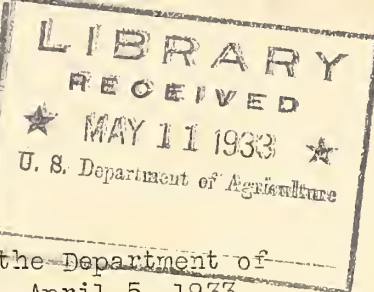


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MARCH WEATHER



A radio talk by J. B. Kincer, Weather Bureau, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, Wednesday, April 5, 1933, over a network of 49 associate NBC radio stations.

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How-do-you-do, folks?

March, as you know, is a month of very changeable weather, usually with a good deal of wind. In some years this month is unusually warm, which is very unfavorable from the standpoint of fruit, because the trees, under such conditions, become abnormally advanced and are likely to be harmed by late frosts. Again, the month may be abnormally cold, following a warm February, which is also unfavorable when the preceding weather had been warm enough to bring out fruit buds. This year March took an intermediate position with regard to temperature, which, as a rule, was moderate, tending during much of the time to somewhat warmer than normal, especially in the Great Plains States. This was in marked contrast to March of last year, which was unusually cold in all sections of the country, except in the extreme West. In March last year freezing temperatures extended as far south as Tampa, Fla., and Brownsville, Tex., while the month just closed, brought the freezing line only to Macon, Ga., and Palestine, Tex. However, some severely cold weather occurred in the Northwestern States at the beginning of the second week of the month, when the zero line forced southward to northern Iowa, and a temperature of 16° below zero was reported from Havre, Mont. In the Northeastern States, zero occurred only locally near the Canadian border.

The temperature for March averaged very nearly normal from the Mississippi Valley eastward and also in the States west of the Rocky Mountains. In these areas the departures from normal were mostly only 2°, or less. In the Great Plains States, the month was relatively warm, with the temperature averaging from 2° to 9° higher than normal.

There was some local frost damage, from time to time, during the month, but this was not serious and, on the whole, was less than the average March brings. The temperature was mostly favorable for growth of outstanding crops, but there was much cloudy weather in the interior valleys and Southern States, which had a retarding influence, and at the same time a few areas remain much too dry. The sections where moisture is most needed comprise the Great Plains, from eastern Colorado and southwestern Nebraska southward and considerable sections of the far Southwest, including Arizona and southern California. Rain is needed in Florida.

The outstanding feature of the weather of March, from an agricultural standpoint, was the frequent and heavy to excessive precipitation that occurred over large areas. Rainfall was heavy in the central Gulf States, most of the Northeast, in the Ohio and upper Mississippi Valleys, and the north-central Great Plains. In the Ohio Valley, the monthly totals were one and one-half times to twice the normal, while the percentages were somewhat larger in an area comprising northern and western Iowa and the eastern portion of Nebraska. In contrast to this, a considerable section of the far Southwest had no appreciable precipitation during the entire month, and a large area, extending as far north as Idaho and western Montana, had less than one-half the normal amount. The falls were rather scanty
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in the Carolinas and also in extreme central-northern districts. They were comparatively heavy in a limited area of the Pacific Northwest.

Seasonal farm operations, such as preparation of soil and planting, have been and still are inactive over extensive and important agricultural sections. In the Atlantic area fields remain mostly too wet to work southward to West Virginia and northern Virginia but in the southern half of the area, that is from southern Virginia southward, conditions were more favorable, and spring operations are making satisfactory advance. The central Cotton Belt is still mostly too wet and field work is practically at a standstill; in the western belt, including most of Louisiana, western Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Texas, progress is fairly good. Cotton planting is active in southern Georgia, while in Alabama, seeding has begun locally as far north as Montgomery at about the average date for beginning this work. In southern Texas planting is making good progress.

In the Corn Belt, field work is mostly at a standstill practically everywhere from the Mississippi Valley eastward. In this area, March rainfall was heavy and showers continued frequent during the past week, which kept most fields in a saturated condition. In the Plains States, work was more active, planting made satisfactory progress, and is about abreast of the season. Some corn has been planted in northern Oklahoma at about the average date. But little oat seeding has been accomplished so far in the central valleys because of continued wet soil; in Iowa some were sown this week in the southeastern and southcentral parts of the State.

The weather was rather favorable for winter wheat in the eastern portion of the belt. Wheat shows some improvement in the Ohio Valley, but condition is still rather spotted. In the dry western sections, especially in the western half of Kansas, there is no improvement in the outlook, and many wheat fields are still entirely bare. In the Spring Wheat Belt, conditions are favorable in Montana and the Dakotas, but farther east the soil is too wet, and but little field work has been accomplished. In the Dakotas seeding is fully abreast, or a little ahead, of an early season, with drilling well started in southern North Dakota; in an average year seeding begins by April 1 to about the North-South Dakota line.

Recent weather has been favorable for livestock in the great western grazing sections, but moisture is needed over a large southwestern area. Rain would be beneficial also in the South Atlantic States, especially Florida, and the soil continues unfavorably dry in the western Great Plains. Except in the South Atlantic area, dry, sunshiny weather is now needed nearly everywhere from the States bordering on the west bank of the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean.